

Amos-Archer House
1120 Bel Air Rd.
Bel Air, Maryland

The site of the Amos family burying ground, this property belonged to the Amos family for at least a century before Joseph & Mary Archer purchased it in 1918.

The oldest section of the house (on the west) probably dates from the end of the 18th century, when William Amos II owned the farm. William Amos II was one of Harford County's most illustrious citizens. First a high-ranking officer in the county militia, he then helped to found Little Falls Meeting House and became a Quaker minister, as well as a strong abolitionist.

The house is truly befitting of such an old and distinguished Harford County family. Set on the top of a hill overlooking Bel Air, this mid-and late 19th century structure is certainly prepossessing--traditional, yet unconventional. Mansard-roofed stone houses are relatively rare in this area, and the double row of dormers is particularly unusual.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

MAGI #1312605504

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Amos-Archer House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

1120 Bel Air Rd.

CITY, TOWN

Bel Air,

___ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Maryland 21014

COUNTY

Harford

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

ACCESSIBLE

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Raymond Archer

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

1120 Bel Air Rd.

CITY, TOWN

Bel Air,

___ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21014

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Harford County Courthouse

Liber #: 298

Folio #: 468

STREET & NUMBER

40 South Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Bel Air,

STATE
Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

___ FEDERAL ___ STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This stone house built in five parts is located in Harford County on the west side of Bel Air Road (Business Rte. 1), where it intersects with Old Joppa Road. The composite structure is irregularly-shaped: the 2½-story east section with a mansard roof is el-shaped and was built in two stages; on its south side, at the juncture of the el, is a one-story recent stuccoed addition; attached to the west end of the mansard section is the oldest portion of the house, which is 2½-stories with a gable roof; attached to its west end is a one-story, shed-roofed frame wing.

In the mansard-roofed section, the east portion was built after the center portion, and dates from the time the mansard roof with dormers was added over both parts. The north end of the east portion and the north side of the center portion are flush and form the long side of the el shape. Laid in coursed fieldstone with corner quoins, this mansard section has a molded, boxed cornice with two-part bed molding and gabled dormers with gable returns. There are brick chimneys in the south end of the east part and the west end of the center part. The roof shingles are laid decoratively, with a center row of scalloped shingles. The windows with plain, beaded trim have 6/6 sash with louvered shutters in the second story, and shutters with louvers over one panel in the first story. There are two dormers on the east facade, three on the north, and dormers in both slopes of the mansard roof on the back of the house on the west and on the south sides.

The east part is three bays wide and two bays deep. On the east or front facade the entrance with a pedimented portico is in the north bay and is flanked on the south by two windows. The three windows in the second story are aligned with those in the first story. The six-panel entrance door has a four-light transom with colored glass; the portico has four square tapered columns on square bases across the front and two attached to the house.

The north end has an entrance with a pedimented portico in the west bay, flanked on the east by a window. Altered stonework west of the door indicates where the east and center sections were joined. There is a two-light window in the basement east bay. In the second story, the windows are aligned with the three dormers, so there is one window in the east part. The door with a two-light transom with etched glass has two arched panels over two rectangular panels. The portico has two columns on square bases in the front and two attached to the house.

The south end is blank.

On the west side, the stucco addition covers the first story, and there is one window in the second story and a double row of dormers--one in each slope of the mansard roof.

In the center part, the north side has two replaced double windows in the first story, with a basement hatch in the east bay and a two-light basement window in the west bay. Altered stonework indicates there was a window or door between the first story windows.

On the south side of the central part, the stuccoed wing covers the first story west bay. The window in the east bay has no shutters, and there are two windows in the second story, two dormers, and one dormer in the upper slope of the roof.

The two-bay by two-bay west wing laid in uncoursed fieldstone has a brick chimn

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #1

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The site of the Amos family burying ground,¹ this property was in the Amos family for at least a century-andperhaps more-before Joseph and Mary Archer bought it in 1918. The chain of ownership within the Amos family is ambiguous, but since William Amos II (b.1718, d.1814) was buried here, it was probably acquired before that. The property may have been part of "Clarkson's Purchase", 200 acres of which William Amos I obtained from Henry Wright in 1715.² William Amos I made this the site of his homestead and left it to his son, William Amos II in his will³ when he died in 1757. The oldest section of the house probably dates to the time of William Amos II-around the end of the 18th century.

William Amos II was one of Harford County's most illustrious citizens. First a high-ranking officer in the county militia, he became a founder of the Little Falls Meeting House and a devout Quaker minister. According to a testimony from the Gunpowder monthly meeting at his death, William Amos had been in the militia (Lieutenant of the 6th company of the 42nd regiment of Maryland), when he was struck with pacifist notions. Thereupon, he assembled a small group of friends to join the Gunpowder Meeting House and then to start their own-"Little Falls". According to the testimony, he "often expressed the desire to turn men from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, being himself an example of meekness, resignation, piety, benevolence, and charity.. He was also one of the earliest abolitionists--"a jealous advocate in the cause of the oppressed descendents of the Africans"--and one of the first to liberate those in his possession and to enjoin others to do likewise.

William Amos II had ten children with his first wife, Hannah McComas, and three with his second wife, Martha Wyle. Which of his children inherited the homestead is unclear. Eventually, however, it passed to his son James, and then to James' son, William Lee Amos,⁴ in 1845. On the 1814 tax list, James Amos of William is credited with 181 acres of "Clarksons Purchase" and "The Grove" and 150 acres of "Clarksons Purchase" on which is a two-story stone dwelling, 22' x 18', and another stone building 22 x 18 with a 1 1/2-story kitchen. The dimensions 22 x 18 match those of the oldest portion of the house. The middle section of the house may have been built by either generation (there is little amplifying architectural evidence). Garrett Amos, son of William Lee Amos, inherited the property in 1870⁵ and, in 1889, the property comprising 230 acres went to his son, William Lee Amos (the second).⁶ The mansard-roofed portion of the house probably dates to Garrett Amos-or even to William Lee Amos the second, who owned it until 1918 when he sold the house and 130 acres to Joseph and Mary Archer for \$12,717.90.⁷ The property is now owned by their son, Raymond Archer, who took over title to it in 1946.⁸

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #1

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Portrait & Biographical Sketch of Harford and Cecil Counties, Md., N.Y. & Chicago, Chapman Publishing Co., 1897.
2. Wright, C. Milton, Our Harford Heritage.
3. Geneology of The Amos Family: St. George & St. John's Parish Records, Harford Co., Md. (On deposit in the Enoch Pratt Library). SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #1

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE _____ COUNTY _____

STATE _____ COUNTY _____

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Natalie Shivers, Historic Sites Surveyor

ORGANIZATION

Harford County Historic District Commission

DATE

May, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

45 S. Main St.

TELEPHONE

301, 879-2000 ext. 207

CITY OR TOWN

Bel Air,

STATE

MD 21014

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

in its west end, and a shed-roofed porch along its north facade. The windows have 6/6 sash and plain trim, and the dormers have gable roofs.

On the north side, the entrance is in the east bay, flanked on the west by a window, with two windows in the second story, and one dormer. The south side is partly stuccoed, which has chipped off to reveal flat brick window arches.

On the west end, the one-story, five-bay frame addition extends to the edge of the porch on the north side and three bays beyond the house on the south side: only the part next to the house is enclosed; south of the house, the wing is a shed.

The interior plan of the east section consists of a stairhall on the north and one room on the south. In the hall, the open-string, dog-leg staircase is against the north wall. It has square balusters, urn-shaped newel posts, and scroll brackets. On the east entrance door is a Dutch lock with a brass knob and on the north entrance door is a square plate latch with a round brass knob. Double doors in the south wall lead into the south room, which has a fireplace in a projecting chimney breast in the center of the south wall and a blocked-up window in the west wall. The mantle has a cavetto shelf on end blocks, a center panel in the frieze, and columns flanking the brick opening. This room has a plain wainscot and molded chairrail, and the windows have paneled jambs and soffits. The trim on each floor is different in this part.

Under this portion and the center portion is a basement with stone interior and exterior walls. The sawn joists run east-west under the east section and north-south under the south section.

In the center section is one room with a winder staircase in the southwest corner. The west wall originally contained a fireplace (now blocked-up), flanked by a closet on the south and a door to the west wing on the north. The doors are of beaded boards, and there is a beaded board wainscot.

The west wing has one room on each floor with a winder staircase in the southeast corner. None of the original trim is extant.

There are three small frame outbuildings south of the house, and three north of the house: a frame barn used as a garage, a corn crib, and an open shed. Northeast of the house is a stone and frame barn with hand-hewn posts and collar beams and pegged rafters.

The house itself is truly befitting of such an old and illustrious Harford County family. Set on the top of a hill, it is prepossessing--traditional, yet unconventional enough to distinguish it from other houses in the county. There are few stone houses with mansard roofs in the area, and the double row of dormer windows is particularly unusual.

Footnotes

¹ C. Milton Wright, Our Harford Heritage, p. 221

²

Josephine P. Amos, who consolidated the Amos family records, noted that "Clarkson's Purchase" was on the southwest branch of Bush River which, presumably, is Winter's Run. The property discussed here is located just west of Winter's Run and may, indeed, be part of "Clarkson's Purchase".

³

William Amos I's will, dated Sept. 24, 1757, in Amos Family Records, recorded by Josephine P. Amos.

⁴

Will Records: Liber TSB 60, Folio 90.

⁵

Will Records: Liber BHH 8, Folio 182.

⁶

Land Records: Liber ALJ 65, Folio 138.

⁷

Land Records: Liber JAR 160, Folio 57.

⁸

Land Records: Liber 298, Folio 468.

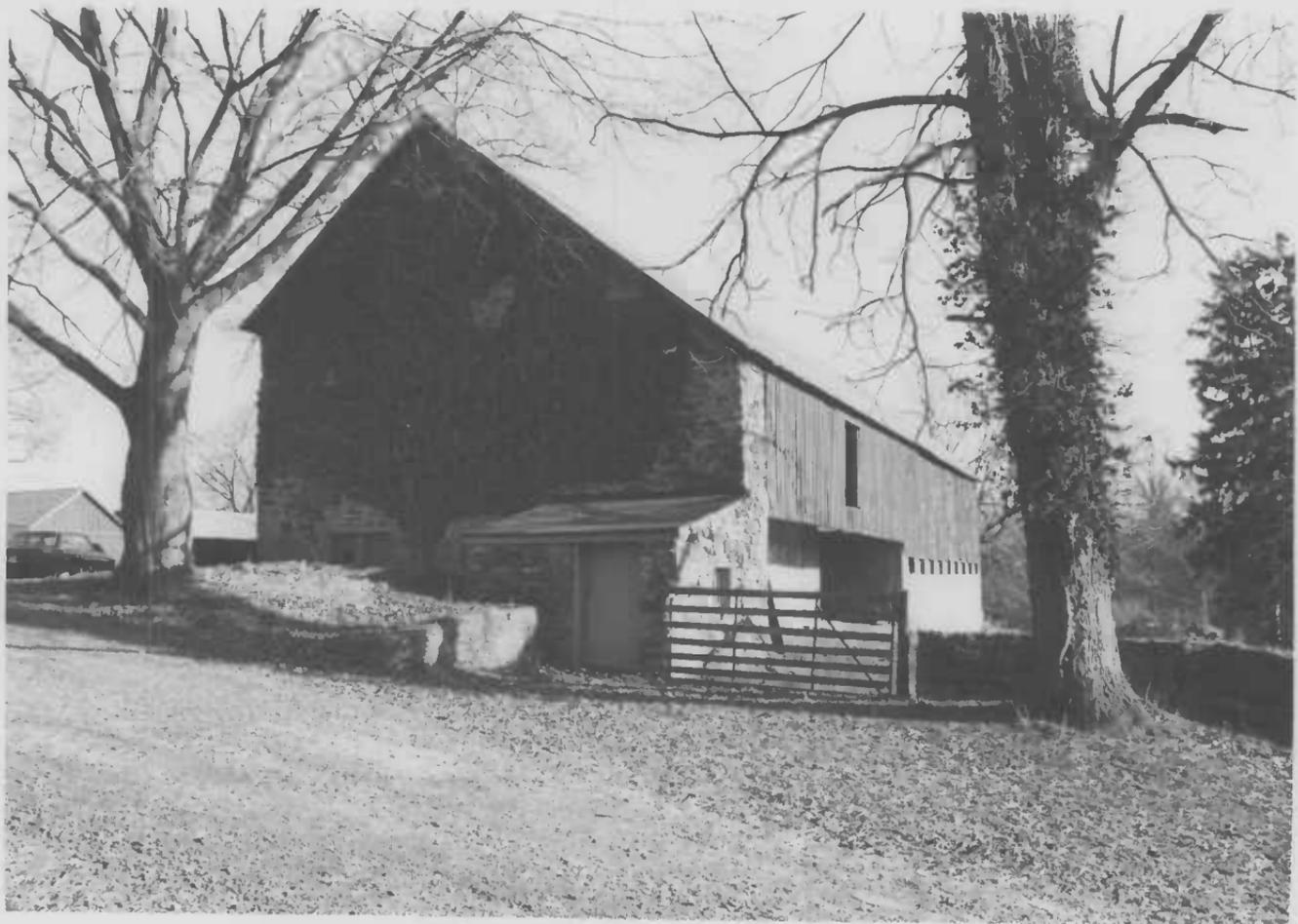
Archer House

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (Cont'd.)

4. Records of the Amos Family assembled by Josephine P. Amos, 1942.
5. Land and Will Records of Harford County, Maryland.

TITLE SEARCH
Amos-Archer House
HA-1260

JAR	160/57	January 5, 1918	GRANTOR: William L. and Sarah E. B. Amos GRANTEE: Joseph S. Archer ACREAGE: 130.44 acres SUM: \$12,717.
ALJ	65/138	June 5, 1889	GRANTOR: Garret Amoss GRANTEE: William L. Amoss ACREAGE: 230 acres
Will Records BHH	8/182	1870	DEVISOR: William Lee Amoss DEVISEE: Garrett Amoss
Will Records TSB	60/90	1845	DEVISOR: James Amoss DEVISEE: William Lee Amoss
Will Records in Amos Family History		September 24, 1757	DEVISOR: William Amoss I DEVISEE: William Amoss II



Amos-Archer House
Bel Air, MD 21014
Natalie Shivers
Southeast elevation

HA-1260

1/79



Amos-Archer House HA-1260
Bel Air, MD 21014
Natalie Shivers 1/79
Northeast elevation



Amos-Archer House HA-1260
Bel Air, MD 21014
Natalie Shivers 1/79
South elevation